

The cover features a vibrant, folk-art style design. At the top and bottom are horizontal bands with pink flowers, green leaves, and orange circles on a cream background, flanked by red borders with white wavy patterns. The central yellow rectangle contains the title in bold green block letters. Below it, a red rectangle displays 'Poetry Collection' in pink script. Further down, 'VOLUME 4 | 2024' is written in green block letters. The sides are decorated with vertical panels: the left has a green palm tree on a cream background with pink and teal chevrons; the right has a green palm tree on a cream background with pink flowers and teal borders; the bottom right has a vertical strip with pink flowers on a teal background with green circular patterns. A central green cactus with red flowers is positioned below the volume text.

ARIZONA STATE HOSPITAL

*Poetry
Collection*

VOLUME 4 | 2024

VOLUME 4

2024

ARIZONA STATE HOSPITAL
POETRY COLLECTION

POETRY BY
INDIVIDUALS LIVING ON THE
ARIZONA STATE HOSPITAL
CIVIL CAMPUS

compiled by rehab staff

INTRODUCTION

This anthology showcases the creative works produced by participants of several creative writing rehabilitation groups on the Arizona State Hospital Civil Campus in 2024.

Each month, staff members have carefully selected pieces through a voting process to award first, second, and third place.

Additionally, honorable mentions for each month have been included, celebrating the diverse talents of all contributors.

POEMS

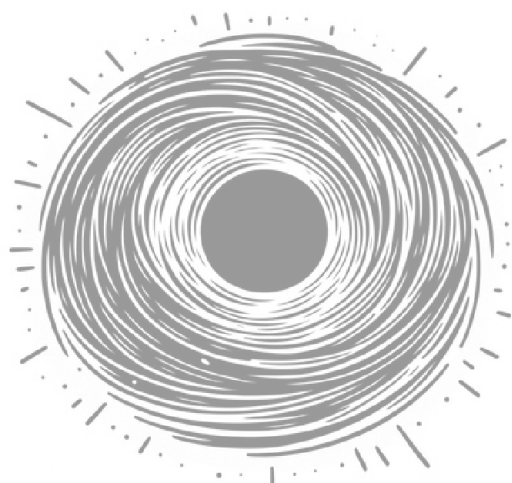
JANUARY

A GLIMPSE THROUGH A BLACK HOLE.
IN BETWEEN TIME DILATION OF TIME
SCALES.

FORGIVING THE HOUR GLASS
FOR SLOWING DOWN THE CURVE OF
TIME.

SHATTERED WITH CRACKS AND
HOLES THROUGH UNCERTAINTY,
PENETRATING IT ALL,
ONCE AND FOR ALL,
TO REMAIN CONTENT THROUGH
IT ALL.

1ST PLACE



JANUARY

TIGERS ARE VERY CUDDLY AND LOVABLE
AT FIRST SIGHT.
BUT WHEN THEY GROW BIGGER, THEY GET
AGGRESSIVE.
BECAUSE THEY NEED FOOD OR LAND TO
LIVE ON
WHEN THEY'RE IN THE DARK
THEY CAN SEE REAL GOOD.
THE CHEETAH IS FASTER THAN ANYTHING
ON EARTH
TIGERS ARE SMART ENOUGH TO BE
TRAINED
TIGERS CAN QUICKLY SHIFT POSITIONS
AND THEY'RE STRONGER THAN
CHEETAHS
I LOVE THEIR BEAUTIFUL BLACK STRIPES

2ND PLACE



JANUARY

THE ARCTIC WAS BELOW ZERO,
IT WAS BITTER COLD
AND THEN GOT OLD.
AS THE ARCTIC SUN WAS OUT
TO HAVE FUN.

3RD PLACE



VIOLETS ARE BLUE.
LOVED ONES STAY TRUE.
HAVE LOVE,
IT MAKES YOU RISE ABOVE.

MESSAGE

YOU NEED THE EARTH
AND THE EARTH NEEDS YOU
YOU ARE LOVED

JANUARY

MAD SCAR

BAD SCAR

11 PLUS 11

IS BOTH DEAD AND ALIVE

CRY IF YOU WANNA BE A BABY

MAKE NOISE IF YOU THINK IT'S GOING TO HELP
YOU

BUT ALL VIOLATORS OF GOD'S WORD

SHALL SURELY BE CONQUERED

GOD'S WEAPON IS FOR MEN AND BEAUTIFUL GIRLS

WORDS ARE FOR FOOLISH PEOPLE

IMPLY THINGS THAT ARE WRONG

YOU SHOULD SURELY PROVE YOURSELF TO BE A
FOOLISH PERSON
GOOD LUCK

WINTER WEATHER

THE NEWS PREDICTS A COLD SNAP.

I WOKE UP TO A BLUSTERING DAY.

THE NEWS SAYS BLIZZARD CONDITIONS,
LOOK OUT!

WINTER

THE ARCTIC WAS BELOW ZERO,

IT WAS BITTER COLD

AND THEN GOT OLD.

AS THE ARCTIC SUN WAS OUT
TO HAVE FUN.

JANUARY

SUNSET

I LOOK BEHIND A MOUNTAIN & I SEE A SUNSET.
IT'S A GOOD SUNSET BECAUSE THAT'S GOD'S
LANGUAGE
TELLING ME THAT IT'S A START OF PEACE.
I HEAR A LOT OF VOICES TALKING POSITIVE
WHEN THERE IS A LOVELY SUNSET.
I FEEL HAPPY BECAUSE WHEN THERE'S A PURE
SUNSET,
I KNOW GOD IS LOOKING OUT FOR EVERYBODY.
I SMELL HAPPINESS, PURE START & A WISDOM OF
BLESSINGS.



WEEKLY ENCOUNTERS WITH PEERS.
INTERNATIONAL VISITS
NETWORKING
TUTORING AND DOING SCHOOLWORK
ENTERTAINING ON FREE TIME AND STAY FIT.
REINVENTING A NEW SCHEDULE FOR A NEW LIFE
OF LIVING AND BEING STABLE.

FEBRUARY

OUT OF SOLUTIONS

OUT OF SANITY, I SAY
THAT OUT OF BOUNDS I'D LIKE TO PLAY
AND OUT OF ITCHING, I'D CONDENSE
THIS POEM INTO A FURTHER TENSE
NOW OUT OF BITCHING, I'D PRESUME
TO FOLLOW DANKLY THROUGH YOUR GLOOM
WHILE OUT OF WRETCHED THOUGHTLESSNESS
ON PILLS YOU FILL, YOUR RULES STRESS,
AND OUT OF DOUBT ABOUT YOUR WAYS
I'M OUT OF COMPOSURE, I SAY-
NOW OUT OF APTITUDE I'D LIKE
TO PASS A CRASS LOOK 'ROUND THE REICH
AND SING A BIT ON WRINGING HANDS
WHICH, OUT OF ATTITUDE, COMMANDS
THOSE LATERAL ME TO, IN TURN
OUT OF POSITION, MUCH UNLEARN
EXCEPT, WE KNOW THAT DIRE FATE
OF PIXELS MAKING BRAIN CALLS HATE
THEIR ODD POSITION, OUT IN ASH
TO RUMMAGE RASHLY THROUGH THE TRASH
OF THOUGHTS! WHICH, GOT, YOU WOULD NO DOUBT
NOTICE THAT, OUT OF FRUSTRATE SHOUT
THE MEDS ARE COMING! THE MEDS ARE COMING!
WE MUST, TRUST MINE CRIED, RUN AND HIDE!
FOR FEAR THE MOON WOULD TUNE US OUT,
AND OUT OF CLOUT WE'D MILL ABOUT
AND WE AND YOU AND HE AND SHE
AND THEY WOULD LONG FOR A REPRIEVE
AS OUT OF LEAVING BEING HARD, WE'RE ALL OUT OF
PLAYABLE CARDS,
AND PHASE WE THIS AND PHASE WE THAT,
BUT HAVEN'T GOT SOLUTIONS, DRAT!

1ST PLACE

FEBRUARY

THE LION ON THE MOON

I SEE A LION FLOATING ON THE MOON,
HANGING OUT WITH ALIENS.
HE IS BEAUTIFUL AND STRONG.
I ROAR AT HIM.
HE SHOWS HIS SHARP TEETH AND
ROARS BACK.
NOW THAT WE ARE FRIENDS, HE TOLD
ME HE WAS A RASTAFARI LION.
THE ALIENS CAME OUT OF THEIR UFO
AND MADE THE "WE COME IN PEACE"
SIGN.
I GET INTO THE UFO WITH THE LION
AND FLY HOME.

2ND PLACE



FEBRUARY

KING JAMES

THE RUNNING MAN STARTS IT OVER
THE STUN GUN HOLDS HIM UP
STRAIGHT
RUNNING FOR HIS LIFE
RUNNING FOR THE WORLD
MARINE CORP STYLE
WILD AS A BEAST
DEVOURING EVERYTHING IN HIS PATH
CREEPING ON HIS FOES
MODIFYING HIS ATMOSPHERE
THE FEAR OF DEATH SURROUNDS HIM
AS HE PSYCHOTICALLY LAUGHS
PENETRATING DEEP IN THE CORE
CONCEPT
OF HIS NATURAL INSTINCT
TO STOP THE FEELING THAT
SOMETHINGS
DEFINITELY WRONG WITH THE WORLD

3RD PLACE

FEBRUARY

SUNSETS

SUNSETS HELP THE FLOWERS BLOOM.
SUNSETS CREATE BEAUTIFUL PASSAGES TO THE
NIGHT SKY.
SUNSETS BRING A PLEASANT FEELING OF
RELAXATION.
SUNSETS END THE DAYLIGHT AND END THE DAYS,
END TO BRING A NEW BEGINNING OF TOMORROW.



ENCOUNTER

I SEE WHAT YOU MEAN,
I SAW A DRAGON.
HE FLEW WITH ME.
IT WAS MAGICAL.

MIDNIGHT MOON

UNDER MOONLIGHT THE FLOCK OF GEESE FLEW.
FIREFLIES DANCE IN THE MOONLIGHT.
THE NIGHT AIR WAS NICE AND BRISK.
THE PATH WAS LIT UP WITH MAGIC.

FEBRUARY

FLOCK

TO SEE THE BIRDS FLAPPING IN AND OUT OF THE
SUN SETTING
WITH THE BREEZE.
ALMOST THE EYE BLINDING LIGHT, ON FOGGY
CLOUDS,
ZIG ZAGGING ACROSS THE SKY.



LUCKY

LUCK IS GOOD
LUCK IS HONORABLE
LUCK IS HAPPY
SO WISH UPON A STAR
AND BE HAPPY TO BE LUCKY

DAYS OF PEACE

NO ARGUING
GOOD FOOD TO EAT
SEEING AND SAVING MOM AND DAD
BLESS US FOR THE HOLY ONE MAY PASS
I WANT MY CLOTHES AND EVERYTHING I WISH FOR
TO COME TRUE WITHOUT HAVING TO SAY
ANYTHING FOR THE WISHES TO COME TRUE

MARCH

THERE ONCE WAS A GRASSHOPPER
NAMED BIG BOPPER.
WHO THOUGHT HE COULD EAT A TREE.
HE WAS GREAT BIG WITH BLACK AND
RED LEGS, COLORFUL JUMPER.
HE SPOOKED A LADY BY LANDING ON
HER-NOT HER BUMPER.
UNTIL HE GREW OLD AND HIT A
WINDSHIELD.

1ST PLACE



MARCH

LUCK WEAVES THROUGH THE TAPESTRY
OF NOW,
THE WORLD REALS FROM DAYLIGHT
SOMEHOW.
THE POSITIVE CONSTRUCTION OF TIME
DELIGHTS THE MEMBRANE AND RHINE.

2ND PLACE



MARCH

I LOVE CHINESE FOOD
I LOVE ORANGE CHICKEN
I LOVE CHEESY SPINACH
I LOVE MEXICAN FOOD
I LOVE TORTILLAS WITH CHEESE AND CHICKEN
I LOVE POTATOES WITH HONEY
I LOVE CHEESECAKE
I LOVE EGG BURRITOS FOR BREAKFAST
SAUSAGE, HAM EGGS, CHILIS, CHEESE, ONIONS,
POTATOES AND SPICY TOMATO SAUCE
I LOVE CHICKEN FLAUTAS
I LOVE BARBECUE WITH TORTILLA TACOS
I LOVE HOT CHEETOS
I SHAKE THEM SO I CAN DRINK THE HOT JUICE.
I LOVE M&M'S WITH PEANUTS
I LOVE PUMPKIN PIE WITHOUT WHIP CREAM AND
PUMPKIN CAKE
I LOVE BRUSSEL SPROUTS
I LOVE CHEESY CHEESE PIZZA
I LOVE PINEAPPLE AND SAUSAGE PIZZA
I LOVE ALMOST EVERYTHING
I LIKE TO EAT

3RD PLACE



MARCH

SUNSET

THE HORIZON SPARKLED.
THE BIRDS WERE STARTLED.
BIRDS FLEW HIGH
INTO THE PINK SKY.



CAMEL

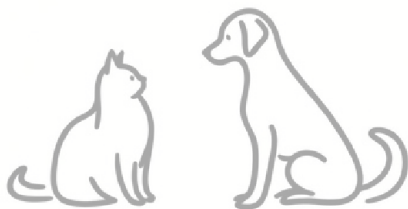
CAMEL'S WILL TURN THEIR BACK
IF THEY CAN SURVIVE THE HABOOB
THE HAZE
THEY RUN FOR DAYS
FROM THE HAZE,
NEVER GETTING IN THE DAZE OF CULLING
THEY JUST RUN FROM THE BLOWING SAND.

MARCH

HIBERNATE

THE RABBIT, EARNEST FOR THE WINTER TO
END

WILL BE PROUD OF SURVIVING THE
PURE SNOWY COLD WINTER WEATHER.
AS HE POKES HIS HEAD OUT OF HIS HOLE.



CATS AND DOGS

WAS ALWAYS MY FAVORITE
MY DAD SPOILED ME BECAUSE I WAS GOOD
EVEN THOUGH I WAS GOOD
I EARNED IT
WHY I EARNED IT
BECAUSE I'M A GOOD PERSON INSIDE
AND I LOVE THEM
MY CATS AND DOGS
TEN CATS AND DOGS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE
THE HOUSE
I RAISED THEM FROM BABIES TO ADULTS
BY LOVING THE HECK OUTTA THEM
LOVING THEM
BECAUSE THEY'RE SO FUNNY AND CUDDLY
AND PLAYFUL TO HAVE
THE END

MARCH

AT A WATERFALL
YOU WOULD SEE A TAPESTRY OF WATER FALLING
DOWN THE MOUNTAIN.
YOU WOULD TASTE THE FRESH COLD WATER.
YOU WOULD HEAR A SORT OF ROARING, HEAVY
LOAD,
AND YOU'D FEEL MOISTURE, COLD, BEADING ON
YOUR HANDS.

TREK
PROCLAIM THE MOUNTAINS
THE TRAILS WERE OPTIMUM
FOUR HOURS WAS THE CLIMB MAXIMUM
THE WILD DOGS WERE READY FOR MAYHEM

CASA BLANCA
I HEAR A SYMPHONY.
I SMELL THE CANDLE LIGHTS.
I SEE INFINITE LUXURY.
FEELS LIKE I'M ASCENDING TO NEW HEIGHTS.

MAJESTIC EAGLE
HIGH IN THE SKY AND EAGLE WILL SOAR
IT WILL GIVE A BIRD'S ROAR
AS IT GOES THROUGH THE CLOUD'S DOOR
IT SPOTS ITS PREY ON THE VALLEY FLOOR

APRIL

I'M REALLY GRATEFUL FOR BEING
ALIVE

AND SORT OF OK.

I'M REALLY GRATEFUL FOR THINGS,
HOPEFULLY GETTING BETTER.

ALL IT TAKES TO BE HAPPY IS
A DAY THAT GOES BY THAT STAYS
CALM!

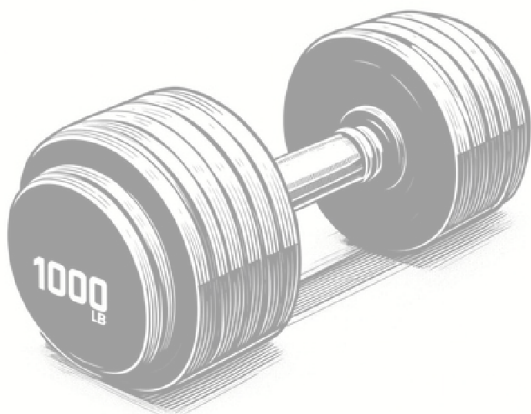
1ST PLACE



APRIL

SUNNY BOY UPSIDE
CHEERS A SPARKLE OUTSIDE
THROW DOWN THE ROPE AS YOU
CATCH
I DIDN'T MEAN BUT I BROKE THE BOOK
I BETCHA I COULD LIFT 1000 POUNDS
IN A BOUNDARY THAT'S ZERO GRAVITY
LIKE LIFTING IN A POOL
YOU KNOW THE DROOL
YOU JUST NEED THE TOWEL
WIPE YOUR FACE OFF FOR TOMORROW

2ND PLACE



APRIL

I AM A WOMANLY WOMAN WHO CAN BE
AND HAS BEEN MAGNIFICENT.

I AM A WOMANLY WOMAN WHO HAS
MADE AND WILL MAKE DYNAMIC
DECISIONS.

I AM A WOMANLY WOMAN WHO HAS
LOTS OF LOVE TO GENEROUSLY GIVE
BUT CAREFULLY GIVE TO WHOM OR
WHAT DESERVES HER WOMANLY LOVE
TO.

3RD PLACE



APRIL

SUNSET

TO SEE THE BIRDS FLAPPING IN AND OUT OF THE
SUN SETTING.

WITH THE BREEZE.

ALMOST THE EYE BLINDING LIGHT, ON FOGGY
CLOUDS,

ZIG ZAGGING ACROSS THE SKY.

ONE TIME I HAD TO GET THERAPY FROM THIS DUDE
THAT'S IN HERE.

I'VE CHOSEN MY WORDS BUT NOW I HEAR,
MY BELL FROM CHURCH.

SO MY SOUL IS MAKING CHANGES INTO THE
CHURCHES.



WORLD PEACE IS A GREAT ENDEAVOR. JUST
REMEMBER, YOU GOTTA PAY THE PRICE FOR IT.
NOTHING IN LIFE IS FREE. WE'VE GOTTA WORK
TOGETHER IN ORDER TO BRING FORTH CHANGE TO
THE WORLD. WE'RE SO CLOSE TO CHANGE IN THIS
WORLD. I LOVE THE EARTH, I LOVE THE ANIMALS,
MORE SO THAN MOST PEOPLE. WHOEVER READS
THIS WRITING, WILL KNOW THAT AN ANGEL HAS
SPOKEN TO YOU.

APRIL

EACH STEP IS THE JOURNEY; A SINGLE
NOTE THE SONG.

REACH LEFT THEN TURN THE KEY, WHEN I
WAS SINGLE I WROTE THIS WRONG.
THEY SAY WHAT YOU GOT YOU CAN'T GIVE
AWAY,
WELL HONEY, I'M GIVIN' YOU MY LOVE.
WHEN YOU GIVE WHAT YOU GOT RIGHT
BACK GIVE IT TO THE LORD ABOVE.



COLORFUL NIGHT

COLORS ARE STRUNG IN THE AIR.
SNOW IS LIT UP BY MOONLIGHT.
BIRDS FLY IN THE NIGHT SKY.
TREES ARE FILLED WITH SNOW.

I'M THIRSTY
OF YOU PEACE.
PLEASE COME AND
GIVE ME A LITTLE
BIT OF YOUR PEACE
FOR ME. THANK YOU
YOU MADE IT!

MAY

THERE ONCE WAS A BUNNY NAMED
FLUFF.

WHO THOUGHT WITH ITS EARS IT
COULD FLY.

THEY PRACTICED.

THEN INCH BY INCH,
THEY LEARNED TO FLY A FOOT OR
TWO.

1ST PLACE



MAY

DO NOT WORRY.
I THINK REWINDING IT.
AND WHEN I DIE
GOD WILL SEE MY LIFE
THROUGH MY EYES.

2ND PLACE



THE SKY IS BEAUTIFUL LIKE A DOVE,
THE SKY ABOVE.
I WAS SET FREE.
NEVER TO BE UNFREE.

3RD PLACE

MAY

I LOVE,
DO NOT FEAR
THE STING.
THEREFORE THE STING
IS NOT A LOVE
IN THE FIRST PLACE,
INDEED.



ORCHIDS, IF MY EYES COULD FALL OVER,
I'D SWIM, ORCHIDS I'M CLIMBING FOR.
PERFECT SOFT RUBBERY SUNLIGHT.

THE LAUGHTER OF FRIENDS.
THE STRENGTH IN A GLANCE.
THIS IS WHERE YOU FIND THE SPARK
FOR DEEP ROMANCE.

MAY

WHEN FLOWERS START
THEY BLOOM LIKE A HEART
IT LOOKS LIKE A DREAM WORLD
FROM THE OTHER WORLD.

I SEE A SUNSET IN THE SKY.
WITH THE CLOUDS AND THE LORD UP ABOVE.
HEAVEN'S GATE UP ABOVE US AT ALL TIMES.



LET THE BUCKET OF MEMORY BE IN
TROOPIDOR OR SIN.
NO ONE STIRRING,
NO ONE CONCERNED ABOUT WORRY AND
ANGER.
IN THE BIN.

JUNE

A FROG JUMPS INTO THE POND-
IT'S RAINING.
THE FROG FEELS SWEATY.
A WORLD OF DEW.

1ST PLACE



THEY TASTE GOOD TO HER
THE HOMEMADE PANCAKES,
ROLLED UP LIKE A JELLY ROLL.
TRIED TO MAKE A SAND-CAKE
THEN WENT OUT FOR A STROLL.

2ND PLACE

JUNE

JUNEBUGS HAVE MANY PERSPICUOUS
WINGS.

THEY FLY OVER THE OCEAN AS THE
WAVES GO HIGHER.

THEY SING SONGS WHEN OVER THE
SAND.

THEIR SOUND MAKES THE AIR BREAK.
SOMETIMES THERE ARE SO MANY
YOU CAN'T SEE THE SAND.

3RD PLACE



JUNE

I CAN SEE MY FEET SQUEEZING THE BOTTOM OF
THE MUDDY WATER.

I HEARD HOT WATER.

I FELT THE UNEQUALIZED CLIMATE,
HEARING SUDS POP.

ONE MORNING I STEPPED OUTSIDE TO HEAR
BIRDS CHIRPING IN THE TREES, SPARROWS. I
LIKE TO FEED THESE CUTE LITTLE CANARIES ON
OCCASION TO THE POINT THAT THEY WILL
FOLLOW ME DOWN THE MALL. I SPEAK SWEET
THINGS TO THEM AS THEY LISTEN AND COME
CLOSER THEN I FEED THEM BITS OF BREAD.



I LOVE YOU. I'M GLAD I EXIST.

I LOVE YOU IN THE MATTER OF LIFE-SAKE
I LOVE YOU BECAUSE I HAVE THE HEART OF IT.

I LOVE YOU BECAUSE I WAS MEANT TO BE.

I LOVE YOU BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT I WAS
MADE FOR.

I LOVE YOU BECAUSE I LOVE YOU
& THAT IS MY GIFT TO YOU BY GOD'S BLESSING.

JUNE

ONLY MY VOICE IS LIKE A LOUDSPEAKER.
MAKING SURE EVERYONE HEARS.
ONLY MY VOICE HAS THE POWER TO OVERRIDE
THE NOISE IN THE DORM WHEN IT'S TIME TO
ANNOUNCE CHOW IN THE HOUSE.
ONLY MY VOICE SAYS IT'S A NEW DAY, A NEW
START, HOPING AND PRAYING FOR A GOOD
AND GREAT DAY.

LIFE IS ALMOST LIKE THE CIRCLE OF LIFE
HEALING IS WHEN SOMEONE COMES ALIVE
AFTER BEING DEAD
SUNLIGHT IS PRETTY AND VERY BEAUTIFUL
NATURE IS ABOUT A BUNCH OF THINGS LIKE
TREES, ANIMALS AND PEOPLE
SERENITY COMES WHEN YOU'RE AROUND
PEOPLE WHO LOVE YOU
SPIRIT IF YOU BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT, HE
ASKS YOU HOW MANY WISHES YOU CAN HAVE.



SPRING STARTS AND FLOWERS BLOOM.
I ❤️ CHERRY BLOSSOMS.
MY DREAM WORLD HAS OCEANS,
SUMMER VACATIONS AND CHERRY BLOSSOMS.

JULY

PIGGIES FLY STARTING ON THEIR TIPPY
TOES

SOME ARE DRESSED IN BOWS
THEY FLY HIGH, THEY FLY LOW
LEARN TO SAY GOODBYE BECAUSE
AWAY THEY WILL BLOW

IN ONE WISH YOUR DREAMS CAN COME
TRUE

THE PIGGIES WILL COME BACK TO LIFE
ANEW

LIKE A WINTER LEAF FALLS FROM A
TREE

THEY ARE REBORN AND SEE
THAT'S HOW THEIR LIFE IS SUPPOSED
TO BE.

1ST PLACE



JULY

TO DRINK WATER FROM MY HANDS
WAS TO KNOW I WAS IN THE
WILDERNESS
AND THAT I HAD FOUND MY OASIS
WITHIN THAT WILDERNESS.

2ND PLACE



RAYS OF SUN ON MY FACE.
THE WARM PETALS SOFTLY
COVERED MY BODY.
UP HIGH INTO THE TREES,
LONG AND MEADOWY.
THE TREES ARE CROSSED LEFT AND
RIGHT,
MAIN PURPLE PETALS FALLING.
ALONG THE PATH,
ROSES BLOOM.

3RD PLACE

JULY

I SEE THE SKY.
I HEAR THE WATERY ROAR.
I ALWAYS ASK WHY,
I WANT TO TAKE TO THE SKY AND SOAR.

MOUNTAINS ARE SO HIGH UP IN THE SKY, YOU CAN
ALMOST SEE THE TOPS. THEY LOOK SO PRETTY
BECAUSE OF THE SNOW ON THEM. SEEING
MOUNTAINS REMINDS ME OF THE FUN I CAN HAVE
THERE. IT MAKES ME REMEMBER SLEIGH DOGS. I
WOULD HAVE SNOW FIGHTS, I WOULD MAKE A
SNOW MAN AND A SNOW ANGEL. I WOULD GO
SLEDDING ON A SLED. I WOULD GO ICE FISHING, I
WOULD MAKE A FIRE AND COOK THE FISH.
MOUNTAINS REMIND ME OF ALL THESE THINGS.



THE WIDENING SKY
I AM SO SMALL
AMONGST THE EARTH
I AM SO HUGE
AMONGST THE MINDS

JULY

THE FROG BEGINS TO CLIMB,
NOT THE LEAST BIT INHIBITED BY THE SLIME.
IN THE NIGHT TIME, WITH ITS BELLY GLOWING,
WHEN IT MOVES TO THE RIGHT OR LEFT IT'S
SHOWING.



MADE UP IN HER WEDDING GOWN,
THE BRIDE IS READY FOR HER GROOM.
THE SEATS ARE TAKEN ONE BY ONE,
'TIL THERE IS NO MORE ROOM.

AUGUST

I RAN INTO AN ELECTRIC GUY
THE GOVERNMENT KNOWS ABOUT IT
HE'S A TEST SUBJECT FROM A SCIENCE
LABORATORY
HE'S A SUPERHERO
MAYBE HE'S JUST CONCERNED ABOUT
CABLE
IT'S FUNNY HOW HE LOOKED INTO MY
EYES
AND HIS JAW DROPPED
BECAUSE I'M SO PRETTY
HE'S MADE OF STATIC
HIS TWO DOGS ARE BOUNCE AND DOWNEY
WHEN HE TWIRLS HIS HANDS
SPARKS COME OUT
HE MAKES THE MOON SHINE
HIS BROTHER IS EDWARD SCISSORHANDS

1ST PLACE



AUGUST

REFLECTIONS ON A POOL OF BLOOD.
THE NEED IS THERE AND ONLY FEAR.
VAMPIRES GET TO TOMORROW WITH
BLOOD TO SPARE.
ONLY ONE PAINKILLER SEEMS TO FIT,
MY DEAR.

2ND PLACE



I AM MOST GRATEFUL FOR THE BIRDS
AND THE BEES
AND ALL OF THE TREES THAT KEEP
COMING TO WORSHIP ME.
NO MATTER HOW YOUNG OR OLD,
WE ALWAYS NEED SOMEBODY TO
HOLD.

3RD PLACE

AUGUST

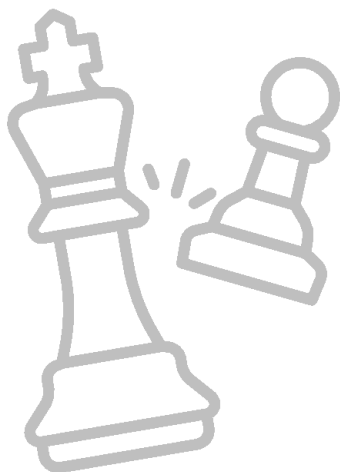
HE WAS COOL
LIKE A JEWEL
I LIKED HIM BECAUSE HE WAS COOL
HE MADE ME DROOL
I WAS COOL
HE DIDN'T BELIEVE I HAD A BABY
EVERYTHING THAT STOOD UP BEHIND HIM
WAS GOOD
HE SHOWERED ME WITH HIS TEARS
IT MADE ME SAD
HE MADE ME HAPPY



VOICE ACROSS A HUNDRED YEARS
SEES THE HEART THROUGH YOU.
BUT CAN YOU FEEL YOUR HEART BREAK,
THE WAY I DO?

AUGUST

NOW LISTEN HERE
LIFE IS A GAME
LIFE IS A BATTLE GAME OF WAR
KINDA LIKE CHESS
DID YOU KNOW THAT CHESS IS
MATHEMATICAL AND ALSO SCIENTIFIC
YOU GOT TO BE SMART TO WIN THE WAR
AND YOU GOT TO LEARN TO DO THE RIGHT
MOVES
YOU GOTTA STUDY
YOU GOTTA GO TO SCHOOL
AND IF YOU DON'T HAVE A GOOD
EDUCATION
YOU ESPECIALLY HAVE TO STUDY
LIVE TO LEARN HOW TO FIGHT
FIGHT WITH YOUR MIND
AND LEARN HOW TO FIGHT WITH MARTIAL
ARTS OR BOXING
TO DEFEND YOURSELF
FROM THE ATROCITIES OF THIS WORLD



AUGUST

SNOW AND SUN

THE SNOW IS COLD AND IT'S FREEZY AS ICE.
AND THE SUN IS HEAT UP HIGH
WAY IN THE SKY.
IT GOES AROUND THE MOON,
WAY AROUND!



IN MIND'S EYE
INSIDE OF ME
NOTIONS OF THINGS TO CREATE
NOTIONS OF THINGS TO DO
OUTSIDE OF THE BOX
VACANT IS NO WAY TO BE
ATTENTION OF THE TIME
THINKING CONTINUOUSLY
INSIDE MY MIND
ON THE THINGS THAT NEED TO BE DONE
NOTING THE GOOD THINGS YOU'VE DONE

SEPTEMBER

STRANGER DANGER

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN A NEWER
EMPLOYEE HAS A DIFFERENT TUNE?

WHEN YOU SING A SONG,
SING THEM A LULLABY,
TELL THEM GOODNIGHT.

IF THE NIGHT
LEFT YOU IN FRIGHT,
GO TO YOUR NURSE'S STATION IN THE
MORNING,
GET YOUR COMPLAINT FORM THERE,
AND HANDLE IT WITH SKILL AND
PRAYER.

1ST PLACE



SEPTEMBER

FROM THE UNNAMED VASTNESS
BENEATH THE MIND,
FLOW INNUMERABLE NEURONS
CARRYING THOUGHTS,
TO THE HUMAN BRAIN.
ALL THIS IS MADE POSSIBLE BY
SYNAPSES
FIRING RAPIDLY
AND BLOOD FLOWING TO AND FROM
THE BRAIN.

2ND PLACE

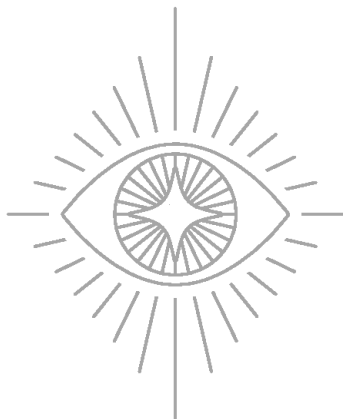


THE COLOR BLUE
I LIKE ALL KINDS OF BLUE.
THE SOUL IT SOOTHES;
I AM NOT A FOOL.
I SCHEME,
I MISS THE POOL,
I DREAM.

3RD PLACE

SEPTEMBER

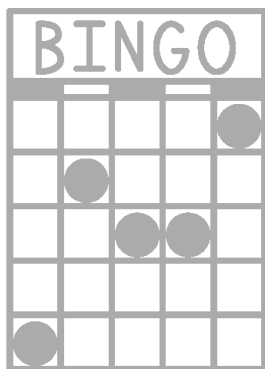
A ROOM OF KNOWLEDGE, PICTURES AND MUSIC.
I LIKE TO USE IT.
BOOKS AND SUCH,
NOT TOO MUCH.
IDEAS TO TOUCH YOUR MIND.
I FEEL INSPIRED ALL THE TIME.



POEM ABOUT MAGIC
THE MAGIC OF THE PERIMETER
LEAVES ONLY A THOUGHT,
BECAUSE AS SOON AS YOU ARE
THERE,
YOUR MIND DECIDES: IS THIS THE
TIME TO FAN OUT,
OR CAN I GET BY AND DECIDE THE
PERIMETERS?
 πR^2 ON WHAT IS KNOWN.
WHAT IS NOT KNOWN
IS THE MAGICAL SIDE.
PLEASE THINK OF THE PAST AND
THE FUTURE.

SEPTEMBER

FALL BRINGS LEAVES OF EXCITEMENT
AND JOY.
FALL BRINGS ANTICIPATION OF THE
MILD WINTERS WE HAVE.
BUT THERE'S A FEW COLD FRONTS AND
STORMS
THAT BRING US TOGETHER FOR HOT
CHOCOLATE AND S'MORES.
BUNDLING UP AND GETTING READY FOR
CAROLERS AT THE DOOR,
WHILE LOOKING AHEAD FOR CHRISTMAS
'24.
OUR HOPES FOR THE NEW YEAR HAVE
ALREADY BEGUN TO SOAR.



WHAT CAN ANYONE GIVE YOU GREATER THAN NOW?
THAN CHOCOLATE KISSES FOR BINGO?
WE ARE ALL PATIENTLY WORKING TOGETHER
TO CREATE A LIVABLE ENVIRONMENT.

SEPTEMBER

THE EVERLASTING FLOW OF TIME FELT AND
EXPRESSED THROUGH THE EXAMPLES OF
WHAT FELT LIKE FOREVER TO LEAVE A
SIGNATURE TO MOBILIZE THE OR A NEW
FRONTIER OF A WAY TO FULLY EXPRESS
ONE'S SELF, LINGERING ADVENTURE TO
START A NEW CHAPTER AND NEVER
WORRIED TO FEEL OR THINK ABOUT A OR
THE NEVER ENDING STORY.

THE PAGE MASTER DANCING ON THE
GOLDEN PAGES
MADE OUR WAY ACROSS THE FENCE JUST TO
FIND OUT THERE WAS NO PLACE TO LIE
DOWN

THAT'S WHY IT IS OR IT FEELS LIKE THERE'S
NO MORE TRIALS TO THE LIABILITIES OF
ONE'S TEMPTATIONS



OCTOBER

THE PUMPKIN HAS SPICE
AND EVERYTHING NICE.

I LOOK TWICE,
KNOCK THRICE.

I COME INSIDE TO EAT
PUMPKIN PIE SO SWEET.

1ST PLACE



OCTOBER

A HAPPY DOE
IN THE DUST OF SNOW,
I SAW A HAPPY DOE.
HAPPY AS CAN BE.
WHEN IT SAW ME,
IT BEGAN TO FLEE
BEHIND A BIG OAK TREE.
SOMETIMES WHEN I CLOSE MY EYES,
I CAN STILL SEE
A DOE THAT'S HAPPY AS CAN BE

2ND PLACE



OCTOBER

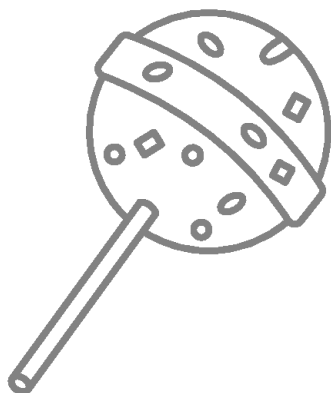
GOLDEN LEAVES DANCE, A CRISP
BREATH ON THE AIR.
LEAVES DANCE IN MY DREAMS,
SPIRALING UP IN THE WIND.
IF YOU COULD SEE THE BALLROOM
THEY DANCE IN,
SOME DAYS A WALTZ OTHERS A
FOXTROT.
RED AND GOLD FALL INTO A PILE
JUMPED INTO BY PETS AND CHILDREN.

3RD PLACE



OCTOBER

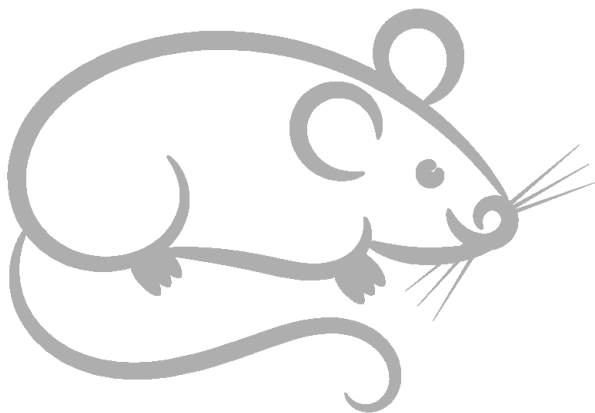
THE SUN IS GONE, IT'S NIGHT.
ALL THE CANDY MAKES THE KIDS FEEL ALRIGHT.
CANDY, CANDY IS SO SWEET,
IT'S WHY KIDS LIKE TO EAT.
MUNCH, MUNCH,
YUMMY, YUM.
LOT'S OF FUN.



STAFF, BE NICE. DON'T FORGET OUR STICKS,
LET'S HAVE OUR LOLLIPOPS TODAY, PLEASE!
A CRUNCH AND A LICK,
WHERE IS OUR STICK?
WE NEED OUR LOLLIPOPS FOR HALLOWEEN!
WHERE'S THE STICK GONE?
YOU CUT IT OFF EVERY TIME.
IT'S A DUMDUM, IF YOU DARE.
IT'S PURPLE THIS YEAR, NOT BLUE,
THAT I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO.
IT'S A TOOTSIE POP JUST FOR YOU!

OCTOBER

BLUE SKIES,
MY EYES MEMORIZE
ONLY THE SUN AND SKIES WILL TELL
IF ALL WILL BE WELL
THE SKIES GO FROM RED TO DARK BLUE
A BRILLIANT HUE
I OPEN MY DOOR FOR THE CAT
TO CHASE A RAT
GARDEN OF EDEN'S APPLE
DESTINY'S CAPSULE



FIND PEACE IN THE QUIET, IN
COLORS SO RARE.
NEVER CEASE EVEN IN A RIOT,
WHEN LOVERS SO DARE.
YOU'RE STUCK IN THE MOMENT NOT
A PENNY TO LOOSE.
WERE IT JUST A MOUSE HAIR, A
PIECE OF CHOCOLATE TO CHOOSE.

OCTOBER

BOO

--OVER THE PHONE--

"I'M DRESSED AS A HALF FAIRY, HALF CLOWN,"

SAYS D.

"I WANNA JUST DO MAKEUP AS A WITCH-ALL GREEN,"

REPLIES A.

AFTER GETTING READY THEY MEET AT STARBUCKS AND GET PUMPKIN PIE LATTES. THEN THEY GO TO WALMART AND BUY SNICKERS, KIT KATS & TWIX-THE BIG SIZE. WHILE SHOPPING, A. SEES A GHOST COSTUME AND DECIDES TO BE THAT INSTEAD.

THEY GO HOME, COUNT THE CANDIES AND CARVE PUMPKINS THAT THEY BOUGHT AT WALMART. A. MAKES A SPIDERWEB ON HER PUMPKIN AND D. MAKES A CASPER DESIGN. D. PUT HER PHONE ON BLUETOOTH TO PLAY SCARY MUSIC WHILE A. DECORATED, INCLUDING A SPIDERWEB ON THE DOOR AND LIGHTING THEIR JACK-O-LANTERN'S UP. THEY HEARD A WITCH CACKLE

-THE DOORBELL. THE TRICK-O-TREATERS ARE HERE! ONE IS DRESSED AS A PIECE OF CHOCOLATE, ONE A MINION, ANOTHER A BUMBLEBEE AND LAST, A MUMMY. A. HANDS OUT 2-3 PIECES OF CANDY TO THE TREATERS. NOW IT'S THEIR TURN TO GO TRICK-O-TREATING. THE HOUR IS GRACIOUS AND THEY ARE READY FOR CANDY.

NOVEMBER

A CAT

I'VE GOT 9 LIVES.

I CAN CLAW,

I CAN BITE HEADS OFF.

I CAN CATCH BIRDS AND MICE

AND RATS

IN MID AIR, IF NEED BE.

I MARK MY TERRITORY,

SO DON'T MESS WITH ME.

1ST PLACE



NOVEMBER

MY FAVORITE COLOR, YELLOW
I HAVE MANY FOND MEMORIES OF THE
COLOR YELLOW.
MY DAD'S YELLOW PORCH SWING ON
THE BACK PATIO,
WHEN I WAS A CHILD,
MY HAND MOLD IN PLASTER PAINTED
YELLOW,
AS A CHILD.
MY DAD'S SQUIRT SODA MACHINE ON
THE BACK PATIO,
AND THE YELLOW CANS OF SQUIRT
SODA WE GOT OUT OF IT FOR A
QUARTER.
YELLOW IS THE COLOR OF WORLD
PEACE, SUNSHINE AND HAPPINESS,
THAT'S WHY YELLOW IS MY FAVORITE
COLOR.

2ND PLACE



NOVEMBER

(MOMENT)

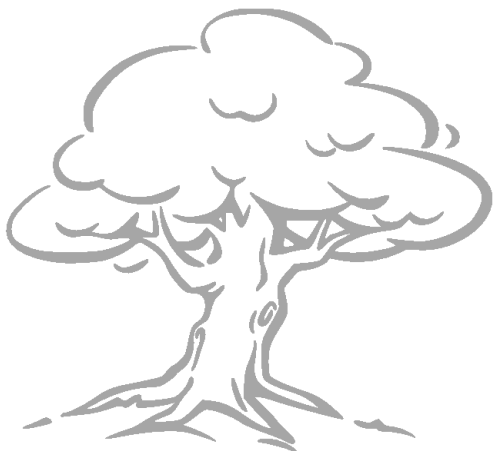
SINGING WITH A FRIEND.
THE WAY EACH OF US HELD OUR
BODY.
THAT WE CARES TOO WAS
COMFORTING.
AND I FELT SAFE.

3RD PLACE



NOVEMBER

LONG AGO HE WAS A CROW
AND HE WENT ON ADVENTURES.
AS THE RAVEN SOARED DOWN
TO THE BRANCHES
WINGS FLAPPING IN THE AIR.
I BARREN THE SEASONS,
CREATED A CHALLENGE TO ANSWER
ALONE TO.



TREE LIFE
SEE THE TREE
HEAR THE BIRDS CROW
THE NESTS THEY BUILD
TO HAVE THEIR YOUNG
IN THE TREES.
THE WINDS BLOW,
THEY SWAY THE TREES.
JUST DON'T FALL
ON TOP OF ME.

NOVEMBER

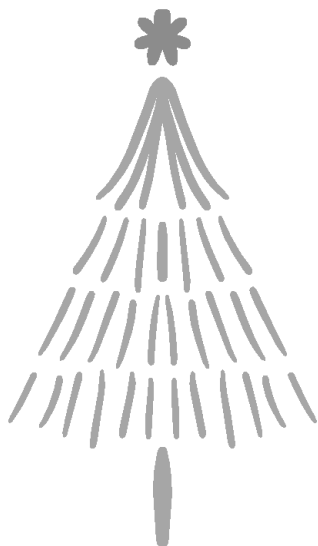
FLOWERS AND PERFUMES
I SMELT CARNATIONS
SNIFFING AND SOME BELLOWING,
I FELT STIFF BODIES AND THICK AIR.



FOR ALL THAT HOLD US THROUGH THE
NIGHT
THE NIGHT,
WHAT A SIGHT.
THE PLEASANT DREAMS
IN ALL THAT SEEMS
THE JOYS THAT PASS THROUGH.

NOVEMBER

WE GATHER CLOSE IN THANKS AND LIGHT,
WE SHALL AWAIT THE DAWN'S FIRST FLIGHT,
A TRIP TO PARIS, A TRIP TO ROME.
A ROUNDTrip FLIGHT TO BRING ME HOME.



JUST A GLIMPSE OF CHRISTMAS
WE 3 KINGS OF ORIENT ARE
FINE TO SMOKE A RUBBER CIGAR.
IT WAS LOADED.
IT EXPLODED.
NOW WE'RE ON WONDERING STAR.

DECEMBER

THE GIFT YOU CAN'T WRAP:

LOVE IS A GIFT YOU CAN'T WRAP.
YOU LOVE SOMEONE OR SOMETHING,
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS.

YOU LOVE LIFE.

YOU LOVE PEOPLE.

YOU LOVE FAMILY.

YOU LOVE THE PLANET.

YOU LOVE WATER WITH CERTAIN
INGREDIENTS.

ENJOY IT WHILE YOU CAN.



1ST PLACE

DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS ARE SO
BRIGHT.

PUT THEM ON THE HOUSE SO
YOU SEE 'EM AT NIGHT.

THEY WERE ALREADY ON THE
TREE WE GOT OUT OF THE BOX.
TINSEL ON THE TREE REFLECTS
MY DOG—HE LOOKS LIKE A FOX.

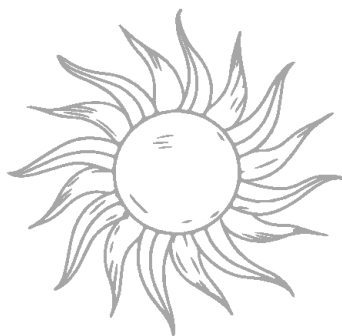
HEY CHARLIE! LEAVE THE
CHOCOLATE IN THE BOX,
GOOFY POMERANIAN MIX.



2ND PLACE

DECEMBER

THE SUN LEANS LOW FOR SOME
TIME NOW,
AS IF THE RAYS OF THE SUN
ARISE TO SHINE.
MY BRIGHT SUNBEAMS SHOW
TIDE.
I PICK THE ONE THAT GIVES
LIFE THAT WE SEE.
MIGHT AS WELL POST HOW
THESE HEATWAVES
MAKE ME FEEL.
SO, RIO, I LIKE MY MIND,
AS I FEEL ITS SHIELDS.



3RD PLACE

DECEMBER

HOPE

I HOPE UPON A STAR
THAT MY LOVE ISN'T FAR.

I CAN'T DRIVE A CAR,
BUT I HAVE CANDY IN A JAR. HOPE

I HOPE UPON A STAR
THAT MY LOVE ISN'T FAR.

I CAN'T DRIVE A CAR,
BUT I HAVE CANDY IN A JAR.



WE GATHER CLOSE, IN THANKS, IN LIGHT,
FOR ALL THAT HOLDS US THROUGH THE
NIGHT.

GOLD ON MY FIST, KEEPING CREEPERS
FROM COMING IN WITH COMPLICATED
THOUGHTS

AND THINGS SO CREEPY.

NICE TO FEEL AS THE ONES THAT DRANK
OR ATE FOOD
MAKE OUR EYES LIGHT UP.

DECEMBER

I AM THANKFUL FOR MY KIDS.

I AM PROUD.

I LOVE SCHOOL,

SO WHAT UP?

GOODBYE

I AM THANKFUL THAT I AM LEFT HANDED.

I REALLY DO.

I REALLY LOVE IT.

I REALLY DO.

I LUV LYFE.

life is good

LOVE WHAT YOU LOSE, AND GAIN WHAT YOU'VE
GOT.

IN THIS MOMENT, IS IT MOM?

HEARING "HELP," I FEEL SCARED.

I AM THANKFUL FOR GRANDMA NIA.

A SMALL, QUIET JOY, I HOLD CLOSE.

DECEMBER

I SEE BUSHES OF CACTUS,
ALMOST LOOK FURRY.
SEE THE RED SAND.
CACTI CAN IMAGINE—
SO RED OUTSIDE, AND ORANGE.
OH! A TREE!



THE STILLNESS OF THE WINTER FINDS A WAY.
I LIKE HOW IT'S QUIET.
I LIKE THE WAY THE HEAT IS GONE.
THE KITE—TO FLY IT.
I WANT TO SING A SONG.
WE'VE DONE NOTHING WRONG.

AUTHORS' COMMENTS

The authors were invited to share their thoughts and reflections with readers, offering insights into their creative process, experiences in the writing groups, and even personal reflections or life advice.

Their responses provide a unique glimpse into the transformative power of storytelling and the broader perspectives gained through the art of writing.

"EVERY DAY IS A NEW DAY. NEVER GIVE UP!"

"PEACE BE WITH YOU, MY BRETHREN I LIVE WITH. KILL OR BE KILLED. I EXPECT THE UTMOST RESPECT FROM YOU."

"IT MAKES ME FEEL LIKE I MATTER. LIKE MY STORY IS IMPORTANT, TOO."

"WRITING MAKES ME FEEL GOOD BECAUSE IT'S LIKE I'M TALKING TO MYSELF BUT ALSO TALKING TO SOMEONE WHO MIGHT UNDERSTAND. WHEN I WRITE, I FEEL LIKE I'M SHOWING WHO I REALLY AM, EVEN IF NO ONE READS IT."

"WRITING HELPS ME REMEMBER STUFF. IF I WRITE SOMETHING DOWN, I DON'T FORGET IT. IT'S GOOD FOR KEEPING TRACK OF WHAT I FEEL OR WHAT I WANT TO SAY."

"LEARN HOW TO WRITE SO YOU CAN GET YOUR THOUGHTS ON PAPER FOR PERSONAL USE OR USE FOR PUBLIC. BE CAREFUL, WHAT YOU WRITE WILL HELP."

"USE YOUR TIME UNEXPECTEDLY, FOR
TOMORROW MAY BRING MUCH JOY."

"WHATEVER HAPPENS, BEFORE YOU DO
ANYTHING OR GO ANYWHERE WITHOUT
YOUR BOSS'S GUIDANCE OR YOUR
PARENTS' WISDOM, MAKE SURE IT'S
SAFE. FUN WILL MAKE ITS APPEARANCE.
PLAN FOR SAFETY AND FUN EVERY TIME.
JUST TRUST THESE WORDS—YOU'LL LOVE
IT."

"WHEN I WRITE, I FEEL LIKE I HAVE A
WAY TO SAY THINGS THAT I CAN'T SAY
TO PEOPLE. YOU CAN SHARE OR IT CAN
BE PRIVATE. AND IT HELPS ME FEEL
BETTER ABOUT STUFF."

"WRITING MAKES ME FEEL PROUD. I
NEVER THOUGHT I COULD DO
SOMETHING LIKE THIS."

"TEACH SOMEONE HOW TO FISH, FEED
THEM FOR LIFE."

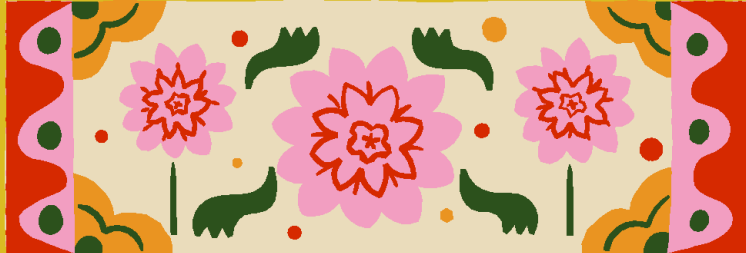
"I LOVE TO WRITE AND SPEND TIME
WITH TORY WRITING POETRY."

"I LIKE WRITING BECAUSE IT KEEPS ME
BUSY. IT GIVES ME SOMETHING TO DO
THAT FEELS USEFUL. I FEEL PROUD
WHEN I LOOK BACK AND SEE WHAT I
WROTE, ESPECIALLY WHEN I WIN."

"BE NICE TO PEOPLE, EVEN WHEN IT'S
HARD. BUT IF THEY'RE NOT NICE BACK,
YOU DON'T OWE THEM ANYTHING ELSE."

"WRITING MAKES ME FEEL SMART. I
MIGHT NOT SAY THINGS WELL WHEN I
TALK, BUT WHEN I WRITE, I CAN TAKE
MY TIME AND GET IT RIGHT."

"IF YOU MESS UP, SAY SORRY QUICK. IF
SOMEONE SAYS SORRY TO YOU, ACCEPT
IT. LIFE'S TOO SHORT TO CARRY ALL
THAT STUFF AROUND."



Volume 4 / 2024

**"POETRY IS
THOUGHTS
THAT
BREATHE,
AND WORDS
THAT BURN"**

Thomas Gray

